

Good Fats? Bad Fats? Which Darned Fats Should I be Eating?

Nowhere in all the mass of diet advice is there so much confusion as there is about good old *fat*. A lot of people believe that fat is the enemy, especially when it comes to weight loss. But fat can be your friend.

There are many types of fats; saturated, polyunsaturated and monounsaturated. In the era of the 'fat free diet' - which is thankfully losing popularity, all fats were considered evil. The only probable exception was Omega 3 which is an oil found in certain types of fish. So at least there was *some* sanity among the madness.

Saturated fats – E.g. butter, eggs and cheese

Saturated fat has long been touted as one of the bad fats, although *no scientific evidence exists to support this theory* (Feel free to go and check; I'll wait...). It stems back from a flawed research study back in the 1950's by a man by the name of *Ansel Keys*. Mr. Keys published a paper that stated, dietary fat was the reason for the increase in heart disease in patients. More recent studies, taken over a larger slice of the population, has since disproved this. Still, almost seventy years later, the myth persists.

Saturated fats are one of the few sources of vitamin K2, a vitamin that protects the heart. They also contain *CLA*, *stearic acid* and *palmitic acid*. These have no negative effect on the heart and may improve our immunity. Saturated fats are particularly good for our brain health. So, enjoy butter in place of margarine and don't be afraid of eggs and cheese either.

"Okay, so butter, meat and eggs won't harm me. So, what about polyunsaturated fats? Are they healthy?"

The answer is one that the lawyers love - "It depends."

There are some polyunsaturated fats which are essential to life and others that can send us to an early grave. Good polyunsaturated fats are Omega 3 oils from fish or Krill, flax-seed oil, oily nuts, such as walnuts and sunflower seeds and green leafy vegetables.

The 'bad' ones include corn oil, soybean oil, safflower oil and cottonseed oil. These are heavily refined and can cause inflammation in the body. This in turn raises the body's production of cholesterol to cope with the inflammation. Don't waste your money on these oils.

Then there are the monounsaturated fats

"Oh boy!"

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